



**CITY OF HOUSTON**  
Fire Department

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**Subject:** *Use of Extension Cords and Multi-plug adapters*

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Use of extension cords, multi-plug adapters / power strips (power taps) shall be in accordance with the City of Houston *Fire Code*. All extension cords and multi-plug adapters / power taps shall be 'listed' (by an approved testing lab, i.e. – UL, FM, etc) for the intended use.

**I. Extension cords.** Extension cords and flexible cords shall not be a substitute for permanent wiring. Extension cords and flexible cords shall not be affixed to structures, extended through walls, ceilings or floors, or under doors or floor coverings, nor shall such cords be subject to environmental damage or physical impact {by rolling chairs, being stepped or walked on, etc}. Extension cords shall be used only with portable appliances.

**a) Power supply.** Extension cords shall be plugged directly into an approved receptacle, power tap or multi-plug adapter and, except for approved multi-plug extension cords, shall serve only one portable appliance.

**b) Ampacity.** The ampacity of the extension cords shall not be less than the rated capacity of the portable appliance supplied by the cord.

**c) Maintenance.** Extension cords shall be maintained in good condition without splices, deterioration or damage.

**d) Grounding.** Extension cords shall be grounded when serving grounded portable appliances.

(*Fire Code*, Section 605.5)

**II. Multi-plug adapters.** Multi-plug adaptors, such as cube adaptors, unfused plug strips or any other device not complying with the City of Houston Electrical Code shall be prohibited.

**a) Power tap design.** Relocatable power taps shall be of the polarized or grounded type, equipped with overcurrent protection, and shall be listed.

**b) Power supply.** Relocatable power taps shall be directly connected to a permanently installed receptacle. {Shall not be connected onto an extension cord, multi-plug adapter or another power tap}

**c) Installation.** Relocatable power tap cords shall not extend through walls, ceilings, floors, under doors or floor coverings, or be subject to environmental or physical damage {by rolling chairs, being stepped or walked on, etc} .

(*Fire Code*, Section 605.4)